GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2227
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2001
SMUGGLING OF HERBS
ASHOK KUMAR PATEL;RAMJI MANJHI;RAMPAL SINGH

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

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(a) whether some specific herbs used in curing cancer and Asthma, found in Khasi Hills of Meghalaya are being smuggled out in large scale in league with foreign elements;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) the steps the Government propose to take to protect the valuable medicated plants;

(d) the details of medicated plants /shrubs available in the country, location-wise;

(e) whether there is any proposal to introduce a Bill to protect such valuable plants in the country; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R.BAALU)

(a)&(b) Specific information regarding cancer and asthma curing plants from Khasi hills of Meghalaya being smuggled out is not available in the Ministry. However, in view of the porous border around Meghalaya such smuggling cannot be ruled out.

(c) The steps taken to prevent smuggling of medicinal plants include:

(i) Collection of wild plant species covered under Schedule VI of the /wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 from any forest land or specified area has been banned by law.

(ii) Export of 29 species of plant or plant portion and their derivatives obtained from the wild have been prohibited.

(iii) Export of critically endangered and vulnerable plant species as listed by the Ministry is allowed subject to a legal procurement certificate from the concerned DFO`s.

(iv) The cutivated variety of plant /plant portions of the 29 banned species can be allowed for export subject to production of certificate of cultivation and a CITES permit, wherever applicable.

(v) International trade in India with respect to species covered under Appendix I of CITES is prohibited and for 17 species , covered under Appendix II of CITES, is regulated under the provisions of the CITES.

(vi) Frequent checks are carried out by the wildlife authorities whenever information of illegal trading in wild plants reaches them.

(d) Detailed list of medicinal plants location-wise is not maintained by the Ministry.

(e)&(f) A provision already exists under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 for conservation and protection of endangered plants. According to Chapter III-A of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972,no person can - willfully pick, uproot, damage destroy, acquire or collect any specified plant from any forest land and area specified by the Central Government, possess, sell, offer for sale, or transfer by way of gift or otherwise , or transport any specified plant, whether alive or dead, or part or derivative thereof:

However, this prohibition shall not prevent a member of a scheduled tribe, from picking, collecting or possessing in the district he resides any specified plant or part or derivative thereof for his bonafide personal use.